

Dave Crooks

State Representative • District 63

1999 Session of the Indiana General Assembly

State budget provides tax cuts, funding for education

The new state budget will make a very real difference in the lives of many Hoosiers. Some of the highlights include:

Program Funding

- Public education: Statewide total formula funding increase of an average of 4.7 percent in calendar years 2000 and 2001, with minimum guarantees of funding increases of at least 2.5%. Funding was increased for both at-risk and academic honors programs. Local schools and libraries also received \$76 million in technology funding.
- CHOICE: \$5 million increase per year in funding for home health care for the elderly
- Higher education: appropriations were increased by 7.0 percent in fiscal year 2000 and 4.7 percent in 2001
- Vocational education: incentives for school corporations to provide programs in which high employment demand exists
- A new \$50 million 21st Century Research and Technology Fund that will promote high-tech industries located in Indiana
- Social services: Funding for the seriously mentally ill is increased by \$3 million in 2000 and \$6 million in 2001. MRDD programs will receive an additional \$9 million in funding.

Savings to Taxpayers

- Elimination of county welfare fund and county welfare administration funds from local property taxes
- Elimination of inventory tax for 87 percent of farms and businesses

Additional \$200 million approved for Indiana roads

I was pleased we appropriated an additional \$200 million from the state general fund for local roads over the next two years. This is in addition to the regular funding from gas taxes. Many of you have indicated your strong desire to see us do more road improvements throughout the state.

I have included the breakdown for our district in the box at the right. The amounts listed for each city are in addition to the total for the county. The amount appropriated to each city is based on the population of the city.



Rep. Crooks discusses legislation with fellow legislators.

Build Indiana Projects District 63

- Washington Sidewalk, Curb & Street Repairs -- \$75,000
- Daviess County Museum Restrooms -- \$10,000
- Huntingburg Parks Department Trails Program -- \$50,000
- Haysville Harbison Township VFD Building -- \$10,000
- Holland Cass Township Fire Department -- \$10,000
- Southwest Indiana Law Enforcement Training Council -- \$10,000
- Oakland City Street Repairs -- \$50,000
- West Boggs Park Daviess-Martin Park District Improvements -- \$50,000
- Stendal Lockhart Township VFD Truck -- \$110,000
- Winslow Community Center Improvements -- \$50,000
- Winslow Patoka VFD Equipment -- \$25,000
- Patoka Township VFD North District Building Expansion -- \$25,000
- Otwell Jefferson Township Park Improvements -- \$20,000
- Spurgeon Street Improvements -- \$30,000
- Spurgeon Park Improvements -- \$47,000

Hoosiers will save \$672 million over the next two years in tax cuts

- Homeowners: a new income tax deduction for property taxes up to \$2500
- Senior citizens: an increase in the income tax deduction from \$1000 to \$1500 and an increase in the property tax deduction for seniors from \$1000 to \$2000
- Dependent children: an increase in the income tax deduction from \$1000 to \$2500
- Small businesses and farmers: property tax “add-back” repealed so farmers and business owners can deduct the amount of their property taxes from their state income taxes
- Renters: increased the income tax deduction from \$1500 to \$2000

New road money for District 63

Daviess County	\$649,005	Gibson County	\$833,334
Alfordsville	\$1,581	Oakland City	\$31,688
Cannelsburg	\$1,709	Martin County	\$278,692
Elnora	\$10,797	Crane	\$2,633
Montgomery	\$5,340	Loogootee	\$30,903
Washington	\$115,452	Shoals	\$11,270
Dubois County	\$960,554	Pike County	\$368,393
Holland	\$13,673	Petersburg	\$27,893
Huntingburg	\$76,935	Spurgeon	\$2,197
		Winslow	\$11,232

How to Contact Representative Dave Crooks

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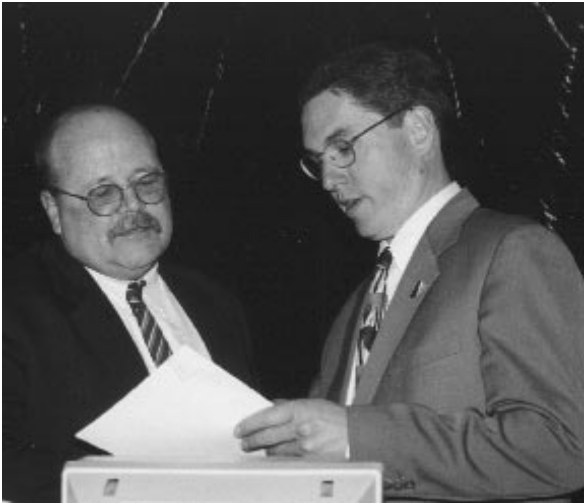
Personal needs allowance for seniors to be increased

Senate Enrolled Act 606 will raise the monthly personal needs allowance for older and disabled Hoosiers who stay in assisted living facilities like county homes, hospitals and nursing homes.

Effective July 1, that allowance will automatically increase from \$35 to \$50. Legislative approval of this increase marks the end of a long journey that has stretched over the past two legislative sessions. It might seem amazing that we could wrangle so long over such a small amount, but this is an important thing for many of our senior citizens.

One older Hoosier who fought for the change was *Shirley Ruggerio*, a resident of the Washington Nursing Center who worked to convince legislators that an increase was needed. Shirley came to the Statehouse on two occasions, and tirelessly lobbied both the governor and legislators to make the change.

The personal needs allowance covers individuals who enter medical treatment facilities in which more than half their bills are paid by either Medicaid or their private insurance. The allowance is designed to help patients pay for those amenities that give them a measure of personal dignity. While the allowance usually is used to help them buy toiletries like shaving cream and toothpaste, it also can buy cards for birthdays and Christmas and other things that help them carry on contact with relatives and other people.



Rep. Crooks with Speaker John R. Gregg (D-Sandborn).



Rep. Dave Crooks

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House publications available

The following publications can be requested free of charge from my Statehouse office by calling toll-free 1-800-382-9842:

Relax . . . -- This informational booklet for senior citizens discusses a variety of issues, from taxes to health problems to leisure activities.

Higher Education -- A 24-page publication for those interested in pursuing a higher education degree, detailing many Indiana colleges and universities as well as occupational and vocational schools.

Guide to State Agencies -- This booklet details various agencies within Indiana state government, listing phone numbers, functions and general areas of responsibility for each of the state agencies.

Hoosier Fun and Facts -- Designed for elementary school-aged children, this information and activity book teaches students about their state through a combination of text, puzzles and other educational activities.

State Phone Numbers

State Information	1-800-457-8283
Indiana House	1-800-382-9842
Indiana Senate.	1-800-382-9467
Governor's Office.	317-232-4567
Secretary of State	317-232-6531
Motor Vehicles.	317-233-6000
Natural Resources.	1-800-622-4931
Utility Regulatory.	1-800-851-4268
State Tourism	1-800-289-6646
Department of Correction. .	1-800-680-5889
Department of Education . .	317-232-6611
Department of Health	317-233-1325
Family & Social Services . .	317-233-4454

Is the address label on this mailing correct?

Please check the address label on this mailing for accuracy. If there are any errors or if you are receiving duplicate mailings, please contact my office at 1-800-382-9842. Every effort will be made to correct the mistake.

I appreciate your assistance in keeping the mailing list updated. This will ultimately result in more efficient delivery and substantial savings to taxpayers across the state.

Dave Crooks sponsors legislation benefitting local residents

Railroad vandalism -- I sponsored Senate Enrolled Act 335, a measure that is aimed at people who damage property owned by railroads. I have spent the past two years working on proposals to increase railroad safety.

This legislation expands the definition of criminal trespass in state statutes to include knowingly or intentionally traveling by train and riding on the outside of a train or inside of a passenger car, locomotive or freight car without the consent of the railroad company. It also increases penalties for anyone found guilty of intentionally vandalizing railroad property like crossing signals, especially if it results in injuries or death.

Annexation -- I voted for the final version of Senate Bill 167, which will give residents the right to argue in court that they do not need to be annexed because they already have adequate police and fire protection and road maintenance. In addition, citizens can argue that they will suffer significant financial impact from the annexation.

Stopping “slamming” & “cramming” -- House Enrolled Act 1628 gives the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) authority to impose a civil penalty on a telecommunications provider if the provider has violated the law or rules prohibiting the unauthorized switching of telecommunications providers or the billing of unauthorized services -- known as "slamming" and "cramming."

"Slamming" is the term used to describe the telecommunications

practice of changing a person's phone service provider without the customer's permission. "Cramming," on the other hand, refers to billing for services not authorized by the customer.

Telephone solicitation -- House Enrolled Act 1434 imposes stricter regulations on professional solicitors and fundraisers while protecting telephone customers.

The act requires a professional solicitor to disclose several items to the attorney general, including the portion of a contribution that goes to the solicitor and the portion that actually goes to the charity.

HMOs -- House Enrolled Act 1309 establishes an external procedure for grievances against HMOs. The act would require the Indiana Department of Insurance to hear grievances filed by individuals who have been denied services by an HMO.

The review would allow a physician who specializes in the treatment in question rather than a general practitioner or other physician to determine whether the patient should receive the requested services. Furthermore, the bill has provisions to ensure the review is done in a timely fashion. In life-threatening cases, the review will take place within five days.

Infant hearing -- Hearing examinations are now included in the tests required under the newborn screening program.